



People First: a reflection on language

Materials Needed:

- The article, *People First*, by Kathie Snow. Can be found at: www.disabilityisnatural.com
- Examples of non-people first language, printed labels.

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will learn to think critically about the language they use on a daily basis.
2. Students will apply ideas from the *People First* article to their service-learning projects and service.
3. Students will think about how people first language may be used in their future business endeavors and communications.

Overview:

1. Read Kathie Snow's *People First* Article
2. Upon conclusion, ask the students to write a "take away" statement (this can also be done in bullet points or key words that stand out to them).
3. Split students up into groups of 2-3 depending on total number of students.
4. Give the following prompt to the groups to discuss:
 - a. Have each student within your group share their initial reactions to the article. Examples are: What resonated with you? What didn't you like or not understand?
 - b. Have someone in the group take notes on a couple key ideas that the group found important or confusing.
5. Pass out labels amongst groups to practice using people first language.
6. Have students rewrite the practice labels to represent people first language.
7. Gather back into a large circle and flow into discussion questions.
8. Closing questions and comments

Discussion Questions:

- What were your initial reactions to the article?
- Have students share the people first language examples that they corrected.
- What was challenging about rephrasing the description into people first language?
- How can this be a struggle when we think about our interactions on a daily basis?
- Relating this to a job you may have in the future, how might language affect the people you work for and/or with?
- What do you think is the overall purpose of people first language?

Homeless Person

Drug Addict

Retarded Person

Poor Person

Alcoholic

Criminal